

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April 15, 2005

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REP. MARKEY ASKS STATE DEPARTMENT: “WHERE ARE THE DIPLOMATIC ASSURANCES WE RECEIVED FROM SYRIA?”

***“DIPLOMATIC ASSURANCES FROM TORTURERS ARE
ABSURD”***

WASHINGTON, DC - The following statement was released today by Rep. Edward Markey (D-MA) author of HR 952, “the Torture Outsourcing Prevention Act”, in response to new Human Rights Watch report detailing the U.S. government practice of using “diplomatic assurances” to justify sending our prisoners to countries known to torture prisoners.

“These so called “diplomatic assurances” from countries known for their inhumane treatment of prisoners simply do not hold water. The Human Rights Watch (HRW) report released today underscores the fact that these assurances are not legally binding or enforceable and there is no mechanism for monitoring that these assurances are being followed. America is saying “In Syria we trust” when it comes to the handling of our prisoners.

“What are these “diplomatic assurances”? Where are the assurances we received before sending Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen to Syria to be tortured -- I demand to see them. We cannot be placing America’s integrity on “assurances” from countries known to torture prisoners – it is laughable.”

Rep. Markey announced that he is formally asking for all “diplomatic assurances” received by the U.S. State Department. “Trusting the word of a torturer not to torture is like trusting a bank robber not to steal. The fact that the assurances are delivered “diplomatically” is absurd – there is nothing remotely diplomatic about torture.”

For more information on the HRW report check out

<http://www.humanrightswatch.org/doc/?t=news> for more on Rep. Markey’s work to end the outsourcing of torture check out <http://www.house.gov/markey/>

